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## **CHEROKEE-LEMP BREWERY HISTORIC DISTRICT**

### **Ordinance 59836 (Board Bill No. 479)**

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An ordinance concerning the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District; designating a described area in the City of St. Louis as an historic district, to be known as the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District; containing, identifying and providing for maintenance of a general location map of such district, which also evaluates the architectural significance of the improvements within such district; stating the historic, architectural, cultural and aesthetic significance and the current economic condition of such district; describing the advantages to residents of such district and to the City which may be anticipated as a consequence of historic district designation; containing, identifying and providing for maintenance of a plat at a scale of not more than 300 feet to the inch indicating the existing uses of all properties within the district; stating a general plan for the district indicating planned or proposed (public or private) restoration, development and demolition within the district; prescribing historic standards to be applied within the district; stating amendments to the existing zoning classification and boundaries necessary to conform to the proposed plan; with a severability clause and an emergency clause.

**Whereas**, Ordinance 57986 (Section 24.04.010 to 24.20.020, inclusive, Revised Code St. Louis, 1980, anno), provides a procedure for designation of historic districts; and  
**Whereas**, pursuant to such ordinance property owners in the Cherokee-Lemp area as hereinafter defined have petitioned that their area be designated an historic district; and

**Whereas**, the Heritage and Urban Design Commission has duly approved petition as provided in Ordinance 57986 on October 3, 1985/ and

**Whereas**, this bill was not prepared within 45 days after October 3 as provided by Ordinance 57986, but the Board of Alderman finds the brief delay harmless, and non-prejudicial to any person; and

**Whereas**, designation of the Cherokee-Lemp area as hereinafter described as an Historic District is in accordance with the expressed desires of a substantial majority of the property owners in such area and is in the best interests of the City of St. Louis;

**Now Therefore, Be it ordained By the City of St. Louis as follows:**

#### **SECTION ONE.**

Notwithstanding its present zoning designation, the following area of the City of St. Louis, together with the improvements therein, is designated an historic district:

Starting at a point of intersection of the southern line of Cherokee Street with the western line of 13th Street; thence northerly to the southern line of the east-west alley in City Block 1537; thence westerly along said southern line to a point

of intersection in the alley with the western line of the north-south alley of City Block 1537; thence northerly to the northern line of the east-west alley of City Block 1537; thence westerly along the northern line of said east-west alley to a point of intersection of the east-west alley of City Block 1536 with the eastern line of Lemp Avenue; thence southerly along said eastern line of Lemp Avenue to a point of intersection with the projection of the northern line of the east-west alley of City Block 1533; thence westerly along said north line of alley across all intervening streets, drives and cross-alleys to its point of intersection with the mid-point of Indiana Avenue; thence southerly along said mid-point line of Indiana Avenue to its point of intersection with the projected southern property line of 3410 Indiana Avenue; thence easterly through City Block 1558 and along the southern property line of 3411 Missouri Avenue; thence a diagonal line across Missouri Avenue to its point of intersection with the southern line of the east-west alley of City Block 1555; thence easterly along said southern alley line across all intervening streets, drives and cross-alleys to its point of intersection at the eastern line of Lemp Avenue; thence southerly along said east line of Lemp Avenue to its intersection with the western line of South Broadway; thence northerly along said west line to its point of intersection with the southern line of Cherokee Street; thence westerly along said south line to the point of beginning, being the intersection of said south line with the western line of 13th Street.

to be known as the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District. The boundaries of such District, addresses of properties therein, and the architectural significance of improvements therein are set forth in a map captioned "Cherokee-Architectural Significance, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference. Copies of such map shall be maintained with the Clerk's copy of this office and in the offices of the Register and of the Heritage and Urban Design Commission.

## **SECTION TWO.**

(a) The historic, architectural, cultural and aesthetic significance of the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District is as follows:

### *a. Historical Significance*

In the colonial years of the history of St Louis, a large area to the southwest of the settlement was set aside for the purpose of grazing land for the villager's livestock. This vast tract was known as the St. Louis Commons, which reached from about Seventh Street westward to Grand Boulevard and from the present Park Avenue on the north, as far south as Delor Street. Although it was originally a Spanish land grant to the inhabitants of St. Louis, it was confirmed to their ownership under American law by an act of Congress in June, 1812. Plans for its disposal were authorized by Federal and State acts by 1835, and in March, 1836, the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen of St. Louis passed an ordinance ordering the sale in the Commons land to the general public.

It was platted in quarter square mile sections, which were defined by streets known as lanes. Jefferson Avenue, with a width of 120 feet, was the principal north-south thoroughfare. In an east-west direction, the tract was delineated by fifteen lanes. What later became Cherokee Street was the eighth of these lanes to the south from Park Avenue.

Among the prominent citizens who purchased forty acre tracts on the north side of the present day Cherokee Street was former Mayor William Carr Lane. Land covering eighty acres on the south side of the street between what are now California and Minnesota Avenues, was acquired by Basil W. Alexander. Eventually, most of the avenues in the Commons area, which ran in a north-south direction were named after states of the various Indian tribes.

By 1860, most of the land sections of the old Commons had been sold to private interests, with the City retaining reservations for parks or City subdivisions. Development of the area proceeded in a general manner from the east and north. Compton and Dry's pictorial atlas of St. Louis in 1875, shows the greatest number of houses along Cherokee Street to the east of Jefferson Avenue. There were a number of deep sink holes on the north side of the street between Lemp and Illinois Avenues. In this sector, the principal buildings were those of William J. Lemp's Western Brewery and the DeMenil mansion, both at Thirteenth Street.

On the southeast corner of Jefferson and Cherokee were Oehler's Hill and brickyard. On the south side of Cherokee, between Ohio and Iowa Avenues, was Herold and Loeh's Cherokee Brewery. Across the street from it, on the northwest corner of Cherokee and Iowa, was the Cherokee Garden, a popular saloon and beer garden. Further west on Cherokee, on its north side between California and Nebraska Avenues, was another big sinkhole. To the southwest from Cherokee and California, was the estate of B.W. Alexander, including a large house with orchards and farmland. West of Nebraska Avenue the houses were spaced intermittently as far as Gravois Road. Beyond Gravois to Grand Avenue the street frontage consisted entirely of open fields. From east of Jefferson Avenue westward to California Avenue, subdivision activity along Cherokee Street had been completed before 1860. West of California, subdivision for residential uses began in the late 1880's and was finished by the mid nineties.

It was during the 1890's that Cherokee Street began to assume commercial importance, largely due to the convenience of the new electric streetcar lines. Two branch lines of the Union Depot, Railroad Company crossed at Cherokee and California Avenue, thereby creating an assembly point for transferring streetcar passengers. This ready-made group of potential shoppers attracted merchants to establish stores nearby, marking the beginning of the Cherokee Street business district.

Before the transit consolidation of September, 1899, the Union Depot Railroad was the largest independent transit firm in the City, with its network of car lines serving most of south St. Louis. Its connection with the Cherokee Street district

began in 1883, when it extended its house car line southward on California Avenue. In the early 1890's this line was electrified and in 1894, the Union Depot Railroad built an electric streetcar line of Cherokee Street, where no house car line had ever operated. Another transit line which influenced the development of the Cherokee Street business district was the one on Jefferson Avenue. This line was originally built by the South St. Louis Railway Company as a house car route about 1877. In January, 1893, this line became a part of the Southern Electric Railroad Company, which subsequently rebuilt it as an electric trolley car line. It, too, became a part of the United Railways Company in 1899. The Cherokee car line was replaced by buses in the late 1930's, and during the late 1940's the Bellefontaine line on California Avenue was motorized. The Jefferson car line held out against the trend to buses until October, 1958.

By 1912, the present commercial district, between 2300 and 2900 on Cherokee Street had become well established. A count of the types of businesses there showed a predominance of dry goods stores, with a total of six. Next in order numerically, of which there were three of each, were saloons, groceries, barber shops, shoe stores, cleaners, tailors, druggists, and dentists. There was then a wide range of miscellaneous merchants and services including, jewelers, photo studios, confectioneries, butchers and millinery shops. By blocks, there were twelve businesses in the 2300 block, twenty in the 2600 block, twelve in the 2700, and twenty-one in the 2800 blocks on Cherokee Street.

Among the early businessmen on Cherokee was Fred Wehrenberg, who opened his first theatre at 1953 Cherokee Street in 1906. In 1912 and 1920 the Cherokee theatre is listed at 2708-10 Cherokee Street. Another early entrant in the amusement field in the district was the Cinderella Theatre at 2735 Cherokee, which opened in 1915. It was part of a complex, which also included a dance hall and a skating rink, operated by Eugene and Harry Freund. They also operated the Cinderella Airdome Theatre at 2727 Cherokee in the early 1920's. About 1940, the Casa Loma Ballroom at 3352 Iowa Avenue was opened, prior to 1940 it was the Show Boat Dance Hall. Earliest of the variety "five and ten cent" stores in the area was that of F.W. Woolworth, which opened at 2743 Cherokee in 1919. It was followed by S.S. Kresge and Neisner Brothers during the 1920's. J.C. Penney opened their store on Cherokee Street in 1936. The Ziegenhein Brothers Livery and Undertaking Company was located at 2621 Cherokee from 1901 until about 1940. Some other old-line merchants in the district were the Dau Furniture Company, the Western Auto Supply Company and Walgreen's Drug Store.

A weekly community newspaper that was long identified with the Cherokee Street area was the South Side Journal, which was founded by Frank X. Bick in 1932. While the Cherokee Street shopping district has been subject to economic fluctuations over the years, it has managed to survive better than some other urban shopping areas in St. Louis. In an effort to adjust to the need for more parking facilities, induced by the increased use of automobiles by shoppers, off-street parking lots were built to the rear of some of the stores in the area in the

early 1960s. With an established tributary residential area surrounding it, Cherokee Street has continued as a busy district for shoppers, especially attracting those who do not care to drive long distances to suburban shopping centers. Since the demise of Gaslight Square, Cherokee Street east of Jefferson Avenue, has supplanted it as the center for many St. Louis Antique Shops.

*b. Architectural Significance*

The Cherokee historic district is separated from its surroundings by two St. Louis landmarks, on the east, the DeMenil home (1849) and the Lemp Brewery (1862), and a newly renovated commercial block on the west. The majority of the eighty-one structures that lie within the eleven-block district span the period from the late 1860s to 1915. Few records exist which describe the original appearance of the district, but the buildings alone tell their story quite well. St. Louis' traditions of fine brickwork, cast-iron fronts, and solidly-built structures were utilized here to create a middle income neighborhood of handsome residences and supporting commercial structures. The area is fortunate in retaining most of its original buildings with only rare occurrences of demolition. Furthermore, as a whole, their structural condition is sound and few have been gravely altered. The proposed Cherokee historic district remains an intact artifact of a working class neighborhood with its buildings creating a virtual picture book encyclopedia showing the development of modest brick structures in St. Louis in the latter half of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century.

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**[Here is appended inventories of individual properties in the district.]**

The current economic conditions of the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District, and the advantages to residents thereof and to the City which are anticipated as a result of historic district designation are as follows: Today the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District is in transition. From the inception of the Lemp Brewery to the mid nineteen-twenties the proposed district functioned as a solid, highly desirable

shopping and residential area. With the "new" shopping district west of Jefferson coming in the 1920s and a growing popularity for the suburbs the district started a slow decline. A more transient population and non-resident land owners created further problems. This period of decline appears to have ceased and the district is beginning to regain strength as many St. Louisians are rediscovering its diverse charm and assets.

While structures are currently being renovated in the district, there are many others in various stages of decline and disrepair. Greater incentives are needed to encourage more and better renovation efforts to stabilize and improve the total area. The historic district designation and the investment tax credits which it affords would help stimulate increased development in the Cherokee-Lemp District and the accompanying preservation guidelines would insure that the historical character of the district is protected, enhanced and perpetuated. A strong revitalized Cherokee-Lemp Historic District will contribute to the strength of the City of St. Louis through increased property values and the availability of quality shopping, dining and housing.

### **SECTION THREE.**

A set of plats and legend therefore at a scale of not more than 300 feet to the inch, indicating the existing uses of all properties within the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District, captioned, "Plat 'Cherokee-Lemp Historic District' November, 1985" is attached to the Clerk's copy of this ordinance. A copy of such set of plats is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference. Copies of such set of plats shall at all times be maintained in the offices of the Register and the Heritage and Urban Design Commission.

### **SECTION FOUR.**

The following general plan for the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District is hereby adopted to be implemented consistent with the standards in Section Five, and in accordance with and subject to the provisions of Ordinance 57986 (Sections 24.12.010 to 24.20.020. Rev. Code of St. Louis, 1980, Anno.).

#### **Restoration and Development Plan for Cherokee-Lemp Historic District**

- (a.) Parking: Parking off street is encouraged for residents. Rear alley access to parking areas should be encouraged, especially for multi-family dwellings. New curb cuts are not desirable except for current open lots and must be approved by the Heritage and Urban Design Commission.
- (b) Landscaping: Trees and lawns must be maintained and street plantings are encouraged approximately 35 foot intervals on all streets.
- (c) Zoning: No zoning changes are presently proposed and any future proposed changes should be made with prior notification of the aldermen, who is encouraged to inform the Heritage and Urban Design Commission and the relevant active neighborhood organizations. Rezoning to increase density should be discouraged.

- (d) Density: Wherever possible, dwelling units originally intended for a lower density occupancy, should be restored to that density.
- (e) Preservation: The preservation, restoration or rehabilitation of all historic structures, as contained on the map described in Section One and designated as having national, state, city or neighborhood significance or architectural merit is encouraged and shall be guided by the historic district standards set out in Section Five hereof. All construction, demolition, or alteration of exterior architectural features with respect to any improvement within the Cherokee-Lemp Historic District is subject to the provisions of Ordinance 57986 (24.12.010 to 24.20.020 Rev. Code, St. Louis 1980 Anno.).